

Claims *What is claimed*

1. A method of monitoring the chargeable activities of a user in a mobile telecommunications network, the method comprising:
monitoring one or more conditions on which charging may be based; and
normalising the or each monitored condition so that the condition(s) can be compared against a standard value and/or used for calculating a charge.
2. A method according to claim 1, wherein said conditions include time based and data transfer volume based conditions.
3. A method according to claim 1, wherein said steps of monitoring one or more conditions and of normalising the or each monitored condition are carried out at the serving node for the user.
4. A method according to claim 3, wherein said network is a GSM network and said serving node is a Mobile Switching Centre (MSC) or a Serving GPRS Support Node (SGSN).
5. A method according to claim 1, wherein the normalising values are transferred from a charge control function of said network, or of another network to which the user is a subscriber, either upon initiation of a chargeable activity or prior to such initiation.
6. A method according to claim 5, wherein a standard value which defines a cost limit up to which the user is authorised, and against which a monitored condition or combination of monitored conditions is compared, is transferred from said charge control function to said serving node.
7. A method according to claim 1, wherein said user is a subscriber of a home GSM network and is roaming in a foreign GSM network, and the normalising values are transferred from the home network to the serving node of the foreign network using the CAMEL protocol.

8. A method according to claim 1, wherein a normalised monitored condition, or a combination of normalised monitored conditions, is compared against a standard value which defines a cost limit up to which the user is authorised, and, if the condition or combination of conditions reaches the standard value, the serving node sends an authorisation request to a charge controlling node.

9. A node of a mobile telecommunications network which provides in use a serving node for one or more mobile users, the apparatus comprising:

means for monitoring one or more conditions on which charging may be based;

and

means for normalising the or each monitored condition so that the condition(s) can be compared against a standard value and/or used for calculating a charge.

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